

Historic, Archive Document

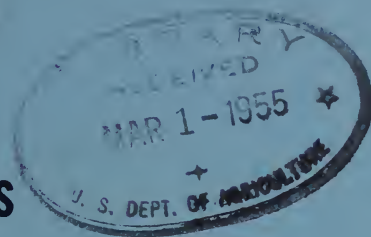
Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.



Library
F22 FCS
cop. 2

FARMER COOPERATION

An American Way



Section A ... 4-H Dramatizations

- The Way of the Pioneer
- Cooperations Lights and Lightens Housework



FARMER COOPERATIVE SERVICE and
EXTENSION SERVICE of the
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, WASHINGTON, D. C.
In Cooperation with
AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF COOPERATION

FOREWORD

The "off the farm" or the "beyond the line fence" phases of farming have greatly increased. Also, as smaller portions of the products of the farm are consumed there, these activities are increasing. Through their cooperatives, farmers can increase their participation in this "off the farm" business.

Participation in business and business organizations requires an understanding of the business and of the organizations. In 1950 the Director of the Federal Extension Service considered the understanding of cooperative farm business by members of 4-H Club and young men and women's groups of such importance that he appointed a committee to develop a program in cooperation. This committee decided that demonstrations, illustrated lectures and dramatizations would be a valuable part of the program.

Some suggested demonstrations and illustrated lectures are developed in this circular. They are guides only. It is suggested that leaders adapt them to suit the particular clubs or groups that use them. One club will probably not be interested in all the activities. Thus, it was not thought practical to put all the demonstrations in one publication. Therefore, FCS Educational Aid 1 has been developed in sections.

Section A. Contains dramatizations on "The Way of the Pioneer" and "Cooperation Lights and Lightens Housework."

Section B. Contains illustrated talks on "Purchasing Feeds" and "Four Kinds of Business Firms."

Section C. Contains demonstrations on "The Use of the Revolving Fund for Financing Farmer Cooperatives" and "Parliamentary Procedure."

Section D. Contains an illustrated talk on the "The Way Farmers Do Business."

Section E. Contains an illustrated talk on "The American Private Enterprise System."

Section F. Contains group demonstrations on "The Co-op Tour as an Educational Activity" and "Organizing a Junior Cooperative."

The presentations developed in Sections A, B, C, D, and E are suggested for older teenagers and for young people beyond 4-H Club age. Section F has been designed for use by 4-H Club leaders and can be adapted to all age groups.

The Way of the Pioneer

A Dramatization for 4-H Clubs

Carl F. Christian¹

Scene 1

A farm yard. Two men in carpenter aprons with saws and hammers and squares at hand. One seated on a saw horse, looking at a sketch of a barn. The other looking over his shoulder at sketch.

Reader: American farmers have a long standing tradition of helping their neighbors when jobs too difficult for one man are to be done. When our country was new the first houses and barns and schools and churches were built by volunteer crews. Skilled builders directed the operations. But every man had something important to do. The big task that enlisted the combined strength and skill of every man was raising the frame into place. That took cooperation.

(Girls in sunbonnets and calico dresses bring in big baskets and stand beside men)

The women had a big part to play in this pioneer cooperative effort. They cooked and baked at home and brought the roast chicken, the fresh home baked bread and the savory pies. All these good things were put together to make a feast - a cooperative feast for the menfolks. This set the pattern of doing things on the farm cooperatively - the AMERICAN WAY.

Curtain (or stage lights out)

Scene 2

A farmer of 1870 standing between the handles of a horse-drawn plow. A second farmer sharpening a scythe. These two men pose as a tableaux, while the reader says:

Reader: The family sized farm is a cornerstone in American Life. This farm in 1870 provided all the food, and much of the clothing and fuel used by the family. The size of the farm in grandfather's day was limited to the acres he could plow and plant with a team, walking plow and harrow. Harvesting wheat, making hay and shocking corn were still largely done by hand by Grandfather and the boys. About 1870, the Grange saw the advantages of uniting under a national organization for cooperative purchasing and cooperative selling. Local cooperative stores organized by farmers and the Grange cooperative system were the forerunner of the purchasing cooperatives found in practically every

¹Land Grant College Consultant, American Institute of Cooperation, 1951.

important agricultural county in America today. The early cooperative stores failed. They duplicated the general stores - and found that service could not be supplied to farmer-patrons alone and make the cooperative stores succeed.

Curtain (or lights off stage)

Scene 3

A farmer of 1951 seated at desk or table, talking on telephone.

Farmer says: Is George near the phone, Mary? Hello George. Pause. Yes, that's what I'm calling about this morning. I've already got Dick and Tom and Sam. I went over the combine yesterday. Our cooperative oil truck delivered gasoline for the tractors yesterday. The boys think we will be ready to open the field right after dinner. Can you bring your truck? Pause. That's fine. That'll give us two trucks, two wagons and Tom's combine and our outfit. We should be through here by tomorrow night and be ready to move into your wheat by Wednesday noon. The cooperative elevator will have the dryer going by the time our first load is in town. That's right. We can use the same crew and Dick's field chopper when it comes to silo filling. You know, George, this cooperative use of machinery is making better neighbors of us all. See you about 10 o'clock in the wheat field.

(Turns to audience and continues;)

Cooperative business goes beyond the line fences of the modern farm. You see we farmers have to spend one-half of all the money we receive from crops and livestock for farm supplies. Farmers are good customers of Main street business. Last year we spent about 15 billion dollars for fertilizers, farm machinery, feed, building materials, the many things needed to keep a modern farm going.

Then we have the job of selling the crops and livestock produced in a highly competitive and complex marketing system.

Farmers need purchasing and marketing cooperative businesses, operated efficiently, to serve as pacemakers or yardsticks.

Today we need in addition to the land, building, livestock and machinery used in production - we need off-the-farm business tools. Let me illustrate how important these off-the-farm business tools are in operating a modern farm. We produce milk on this farm. We and our neighbors own a cooperative processing plant through which our milk goes to consumers.

Let's call in some craftsmen who represent the many businesses which we farmers patronize when we own and operate cooperatively purchasing or marketing facilities.

The building trades - (here comes in a mason who lays three or four tile as the beginning of a masonry building corner, kneels and puts his plumb line on the corner) provide the structures in which cooperatives warehouse farm supplies and process farm products.

Millwrights - (here comes in a man carrying a pulley and short shaft on his shoulder and with a short length of belting looped over his arm and takes his place near the mason) install the machinery we need in cooperative processing plants.

The power for turning machines in a cooperative processing plant - (here comes in a man dressed as a lineman with safety belt loaded with tools and climbing irons on his legs, takes his place with the mason and the millwright) is purchased from an electrical generating company.

The off-the-farm business tools that we own and operate cooperatively are customers of other business along Main Street.

In fact - every morning one of my boys - (here comes in a young man carrying two milk cans in his hands) delivers our milk to the cooperative creamery, but he frequently stops at the grocery store and the filling station or buys some items at the hardware store. Our milk is processed and marketed cooperatively. Milk from some farms near us is processed and marketed through a creamery that is owned by a company whose stockholders are not farmers. In our town farmers have their choice of selling milk cooperatively or through the competing creamery. This is an example of the competitive, free enterprise way of doing business - the AMERICAN WAY.

The same free-enterprise - competitive system applies to purchasing farm supplies. We think farmers are wise to own and operate some businesses dealing in farm supplies and to have under their control the quality, service and margins charged on farm supply business.

It is just good common sense to have competition in the sale of farm commodities worth 30 billion dollars every year and in the purchase of farm supplies worth half that sum. That's why better than half of all the farmers in America are member-patrons of cooperatives.

Cooperation Lights and Lightens Housework

A Dramatization for 4-H Clubs

Carl F. Christian¹

Scene 1

Kitchen in modern farm home. Woman in late 20's and her mother. Young woman seated at electric mangle. Her mother in a rocking chair darning stockings.

Mother: Jane, I wonder if you remember how we used to iron when you were a little girl?

Daughter: You used to have that old hand electric iron and our own light plants. But I like this mangle much better, except for a few things.

Mother: Oh! I mean before Dad bought the electric light plant. I wish we had some pictures of the old house and the way we did things when we were first married. That would be as interesting as my grandmother's old album. How you youngsters used to laugh at the funny clothes and the old fashioned hairdo's in that album.

Daughter: By the way, Mother. My 4-H club girls are coming here for their meeting next week. Do you suppose we could get up a program that would be good enough to use in our county public speaking contest on the idea you have just suggested: "How electricity has changed the farm home."

Mother: That should be easy! There are certainly lots of changes to talk about.

Daughter: We could do it with only a few speaking parts. Have the club members dress in old fashioned costumes - sort of tableaux - Grandmother carrying water from the spring - or walking from the range to her ironing board with an old-fashioned sad iron - or scattering tea leaves on the parlor carpet then sweeping the carpet with a broom.

Mother: Or one scene showing what lights have done to make Dad's work easier at the barn.

Curtain (or stage lights off)

Scene 2 (reader off stage)

Two men, one reaching up to hang a lighted lantern on a peg; the other holding a pitchfork and looking up so that the lantern light is thrown on his upturned face.

¹Land Grant College Consultant, American Institute of Cooperation, 1951.

Reader: Within the dimly lit circle from this lantern farmers did their barn chores, cared for sick livestock, moved from corn crib to feeding trough, did all the work on the farm that begins before sun-up and ends long after daylight has faded.

They tell the story about a farmer and his hired man doing the milking by lantern light one evening. This barn had been wired for electric lights, the light bulbs were in place, everything ready to go; but the power line passing the farm had not yet been hooked up to the generating plant. While these men were milking, the connection with the generating plant was made and the master switch thrown. The barn lights went on the hired man yelled.



"Gosh! Turn off them things, till I can find m' lantern:-

Curtain (or lights off stage)

Scene 3

Woman bending over tub, rubbing clothes on a board.

Reader: Keeping a supply of clean overalls for her men folks - and doing the rest of the family wash made Monday - truly a "blue" day on the farm before electricity and the modern washing machine came into the open country. Of course we had some hand-cranked washers, then some driven by gasoline engines. Keeping those early gas engines going was almost as much of a job though as rubbing the clothes on a board. What a relief it was to have dependable power, by simply throwing a switch. No wonder our hands were rough and red and our nails broken with that weekly soaking in hot suds.

Curtain (or stage lights off)

Scene 4

Young couple on old fashioned sofa. Table beside the sofa and a kerosene lamp on the table. The young man and girl are seated at either end of

the sofa as the reading begins. They gradually get closer, the girl shifting her position toward him as the reader says:

Reader: Young folks are pretty much alike. We had fun in the lamp-lit days, too. I can remember when Henry first came to see me. We sat in the parlor with my folks for a while. Pa talked politics. Then he and Mother excused themselves. "Five o'clock comes pretty early," Pa would say. That was sort of a hint that my beau wasn't to stay too late. We didn't waste much time changing seats to the sofa after we heard Pa's second boot drop on the floor upstairs.

Now boys and girls go to movies and hold hands. But that's kind of a public place, it seems to me. Not half as nice as the parlor at home. (The young man reaches over and gradually turns the lamp lower. The girl puts her head on his shoulder and sighs.)

Reader: Yes, there were some advantages in the good old days before we had electricity.

Curtain (or stage lights off)

Scene 5

Back to the modern kitchen.

Daughter: But Mother! I've often wondered why it took so long for us to get electricity by power lines out here. They had it in town when I started to the consolidated school. Not many families had as many of the appliances as I have now, but they had lights and washing machines and some of them had sweepers 15 years before we did.

Mother: You probably do not remember or were too busy with your school work. Henry and I talked about it a lot. Some of the men even went to the county seat to see the power company. They found out that it would cost nearly a thousand dollars each to bring the power lines less than a mile out here from town. We wanted the electricity alright, but we just didn't have that much money.

Daughter: Now I remember. We had a debate while I was in the last year of high school. "Resolved: That the farm light plant is a better investment than the 'high-power' line," as we called it then.

Mother: That's just the way your father felt. That's why we got that battery plant. It was wonderful, too, even if we had to run the engine when I ironed as you mentioned.

The farm organizations took up that question about building power lines. Our State organization hired a young fellow just out of college. He was an agricultural engineer. The night he talked at our school we had as big a crowd as you see at the basket ball tournaments these days.

He told us that if farmers would go together they could borrow money and build their own lines. It sounded too good to be true.

Every family on this road was at that first meeting. We had another meeting here at our house two nights later; and the first petition was signed right in there on the dining room table. I've always been proud of the way Henry handled that meeting.

Daughter: But he said not so long ago, Mother, a lot of the new families in our neighborhood take all the conveniences that electricity has made possible as a matter of course. They never stop to think about the night meetings and the trips Father and Sam Steward and Will Nickerson took to get a rural electric cooperative organized.

Mother: Maybe that's our fault. It is so easy to take things for granted once you have them. Farmers pay less per unit of electricity now than many families living in town. Of course that is partly because we use electricity for so many more things and get the advantage of lower rates on a large number of units. It just proves what your father said in the meetings: When farmers work together in a cooperative to lower costs of things we have to buy, we can live as well as, yes, I'll say we can live better, than many families in town. We need to keep on telling that to the young married couples like you and Bill; and we have to tell it to the boys and girls that are growing up on our farms. You can't take cooperatives for granted, Jane. You have to keep working together.

(Curtain or stage lights off)



